

A BARREN SHORE

61

it was with sinking hearts that they  
examined  
.the coast on which they had found  
refuge.

Fritz had been able to see part of it  
the day  
Before, when it was a mile or so away.  
Viewed  
from that point it extended ten or twelve  
miles east  
and west. From the promontory at the f  
opt\* of  
which the boat was moored, only a  
fifth of that,  
at most, could be seen, shut in between  
two angles  
~with the sea beyond, clear and lucent  
on the right  
land but still dark upon the left. The  
shore  
extended for a stretch of perhaps a  
mile, enclosed  
at each end by lofty bastions of rock,  
while a  
black cliff completely shut it in behind.  
This cliff must have been eight or nine  
hundred  
feet in height, rising sheer from the  
beach, which  
sloped steeply up to its base. Was it  
higher  
still beyond ? That could only be  
ascertained  
by scaling the crest by means of the  
bastions,  
one of which, the one to the east,  
running rather  
farther out to sea, presented an outline  
that was  
'not so perpendicular. Even on that  
side, how-  
ever, the ascent would be an uncommonly  
difficult  
one, if indeed it were not  
impracticable.

Captain Gould and his companions  
were first  
conscious of a feeling of utter  
discouragement  
as they beheld the wild desolation of  
this carpet  
of sand, with points of rock jutting out  
here and  
.there. Not a tree, not a bush, not  
a trace of  
: Vegetation / Here were the melancholy  
and horror